

THE 6
STRUGGLES
OF
SHERIDAN,
K
OR
THE MINISTRY IN FULL CRY.

To Virtue only and her Friends a Friend.

POPE.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. KERBY, STAFFORD STREET, OLD BOND STREET.

MDCGXC,



THE
S T R U G G L E S
OF
S H E R I D A N.

“ **I** Oft thank God when in the squares so fine,
“ That none I meet know when or where I dine;
“ Not one can guess by word, or dress, or look,
“ My very slight acquaintance with a cook;
“ Whether abroad for nice tit bits I roam,
“ Or dress and eat my mutton chop at home:”

B

Thus

Thus fung a Bard in tawdry vestments gay,
As down the Mall he bent his noontide way.

Athwart each walk he cast a searching eye,
In hopes by chance some rich dull rogue to spy,
Who'd give for flatt'ry luscious, rich, and fine,
The man of wit some mutton and some wine;
Then mark some lucky hit or *bon môt* down,
And, like George Selwyn, pass it for his own.

Thus in Fleet Street, at Scandal's thriving shop,
Where scribbling rogues their party bantlings drop,
The cudgell'd bookseller much paper stains,
Brainless himself, to live on others brains :
And while stern Napier tried his skull with blows,
He begg'd he'd hold his hand and not his nose.

Our

Our Poet sigh'd, but one resource he sees,
 To lounge on benches, or to count the trees :
 At last it happen'd to the hungry elf,
 To dine on what he did not dress himself,
 For near that sweep, by which sage courtiers go
 To Constitution Hill, or Pimlico ;
 That Constitution which, with such renown,
 Pitt gallops up, but oft'ner gallops down,
 A coach appear'd in view, and soon display'd
 Jack Robinson, in turn-coat garb array'd.
 A Jackall he, by one and all agreed on,
 Who smelt out prey for Lion Pitt to feed on ;
 Who join'd for many years the fawning pack,
 But now on North he basely turns his back,
 With fell ingratitude, that crime accurst,
 He stings that hand which nurs'd the reptile first.

After of pliant bows a mutual score,
 And wish'd for found " My friend, I dine at four,"
 The bard went home with cheerful look and note,
 To pen a sonnet and to brush his coat.

A SONNET
 IN PRAISE OF EATING.

Written by a Hungry Poet.

WHAT is the bliss of metre or of rhyme!
 What are the joys that women can afford!
 Compar'd to those we taste at dinner time,
 When dainty viands smoke upon the board:

Genius

Genius of Eating with thee let me live,
 Solid and frequent dost thou give delight,
 Bacchus and Venus short-liv'd raptures give,
 But we can eat at morning, noon, and night.

The loss of other joys in age we moan,
 The god of love from wrinkles flies away,
 But without teeth we soup can swallow down,
 And eat nice hashes tho' our hairs are grey;
 If such the pleasure that good cheer affords,
 Wou'd I were chaplain to a score of Lords.

The clock strikes four, he hastens to the treat,
 At Mr. Robinson's near Cockspur Street.

The

The art to eat might well be understood,
 The fish was excellent, the port was good ;
 Between each dish in chit-chat talk he dealt,
 And oft lamented that so much he felt.

All else withdrawn, the Jackall thus addrest,
 With winning smiles and looks, his rhyming guest.

“ Thrice happy was I thus to meet my friend,

“ Whose aid tho’ feldom ask’d, he now must lend;

“ I need not paint the various ills we find,

“ From Sheridan’s keen wit and sense refin’d :

“ For injur’d worth, when pity bids him speak,

“ The pearly tear adorns each lovely cheek.

“ Pleading for Asia in the Gothic Hall,

“ How throbs each heart responsive at his call :

“ Need I repeat how Pitt supports the health

“ Of his sick fame, by boast of public wealth;

“ A short-

" A short-tim'd boast—for Sherry (more his shame),
 " Prov'd all was puff and visionary dream.
 " But thanks to Discord, that officious wench,
 " We hope to see him on the Treas'ry Bench :
 " For he and Edmund are at daggers draw,
 " Pitt saw them differ, and with pleasure saw ;
 " The little Major caper'd up and down,
 " 'Till aw'd to nought by Fox's furly frown ;
 " He fat, his pamphlets read, which nothing mean,
 " Or chatter'd nonsense to conceal chagrin.

" Thus have I seen, where Avon's waters run,
 " A foolish gudgeon basking in the sun ;
 " Among the minnows he wou'd something seem,
 " 'Till some large fish, the master of the stream,
 " Sail'd proudly down ; the worthless gudgeon fled,
 " And safety found in muddy clouds it made.

" But

" But to my purpose—I was soon dispatch'd,
 " To try if Sherry cou'd not now be catch'd ;
 " But struck with awe, I felt *some* sense of shame
 " Glow on my cheek, the terms I durst not name ;
 " The *Boy was angry*, BOGGY felt surprise,
 " For once LEEDS frown'd, and THURLOW d——d my eyes.

" By your advice we know he will abide,
 " You are his friend, his counsellor and guide ;
 " Haste then to Bruton Street, prepare his mind,
 " To meet our offers with no looks unkind ;
 " For 'tis decreed this evening that we
 " Shall all assail—PITT, HAWKSBURY, with me
 " And other friends, whom he will scarce resist,
 " If in the effort you will but assist.
 " Protest that PORTLAND (you have dy'd before)
 " Full in his face had shut the council door ;

" Touch

" Touch on BURKE's passion; Fox's jealous wiles,
 " When he engrossed the PRINCE of WALES's smiles.
 " For more instructions now you need not wait,
 " Exert your skill—we shall be there at eight.
 " WARTON grows fat, and has a cough severe,
 " And TICKELL has a place you well know where."

The Bard that passage tried, with pace so light,
 Which, like LORD LANSDOWN's ways, is out of sight;
 And as he pass'd the simp'ring MARQUIS fees;
 Who thus spoke, smiling, hid among his trees :
 " I'm vex'd for BURKE and SHERIDAN in troth ;
 " Pray, when you see them, say, I love them both :
 " Or INS or OUTS none hostile me can call !
 " I can shake hands, and nod, and smile to all ;
 " With me and JEKYLL you cou'd snugly fit,
 " Supreme in Verse, Law, Politics, and Wit."

The poet bow'd, but keeping on his road,
He soon arriv'd at SHERIDAN's abode.

Far in a deep saloon he found him plac'd,
So oft by worth, by wit, by beauty grac'd:
Care rough'd his brow, and sorrow wrung his heart;
While thus the Bard made essay of his art:

“ Yet, yet may smiles thy wrinkled front unbend,
“ Far other scenes thou shortly shalt attend;
“ No more, misled by PORTLAND and by FOX,
“ Shalt thou hold forth in thy impeachment box;
“ But, grac'd by levee nods and royal smiles,
“ Pensions and sinecures reward thy toils.”

But as he spoke, the blazing flambeaux glar'd,
The porter wond'ring, and the footmen star'd,

While

While thro' the hall the thund'ring knockers roar,
And PITT's great name the liv'ried vassals bore.

With looks important and a solemn bend,
PITT thus began a speech he had just penn'd:
“ At other times and places have we sat,
“ In verbal storm to guide the long debate ;
“ But now, I trust, those hateful things are o'er,
“ And we shall meet as deadly foes no more.
“ Whate'er you hope, you wish for, Sir, or want,
“ Speak but the word, and we'll profusely grant ;
“ Whether in Eastern climes the golden spoil,
“ Or Ireland's sceptre shall reward your toil ;
“ Whether a peer, like AUCKLAND, you wou'd be,
“ And *live at home* upon an embassy ;
“ Or if my brother's place you'd rather have,
“ His *strong pretensions* he shall quickly wave ;

“ Nor can I doubt but I should quickly see,
 “ You’d almost manage ships as well as he :
 “ Grant but this wish, but this request fulfill,
 “ Spare my Finance and poor Tobacco Bill.”

He more had spoke, but Thurlow enter’d next,
 With spleen and gout and PEPPER ARDEN vext.

“ I’ll to the point at once without more fuss,
 “ God damme, Sheridan, be one of us :
 “ Grac’d with your sense, at council I may fit,
 “ No longer manag’d by Dundas and Pitt ;
 “ Who carry all their points from me by God,
 “ Absorbing ev’ry royal smile and nod.
 “ I think *that* Pitt, with all his modest brag,
 “ Intrigues with ~~her~~ ^{*that*} ugly hag ;
 “ For I have seen her cast a leering eye,
 “ And look quite liqu’rish as he passes by.

“ She

“ She, tho’ she’s antient, shrivell’d and uncouth,
 “ Has in her mouth one scraggy, long colt’s tooth,
 “ With which she feasts on Billy’s maiden airs,
 “ Before she’ll let him pass the *closet stairs*.
 “ Come, ’tis a bargain, when new feats you’d try,
 “ I’ll teach in speech a figure new—to cry,
 “ Its pow’rs are great when arguments are bare,
 “ A damn’d good stop-gap is a well tim’d fear.”

The learn’d Belgrave next essay’d to speak ;
 But no one understood his broken Greek.
 The party laugh’d, when straight along the hall,
 A man who’s hated, but who’s fear’d by all—
 Whilst many an heir his wretch’d fires deplore,
 Plunder’d and exil’d to a foreign shore ;
 With each low art that vulgar minds employ,
 The drunken riot and the sensual joy,

The

The well cogg'd die, the sharper's wily trick;

By blows disgrac'd and many an angry kick;

With no one honourable act of life;

A murder'd sister*, prostituted wife—

Was usher'd in, and Sheridan address'd:

“ If in pursuits which God and men detest,

“ I favour find with you, unspotted youth!

“ More than he yields to probity and truth,

“ If such *my* gifts, think what will be *thy* prize,

“ Unskill'd in wiles which taught me first to rise:

“ To patriot motives make no more thy vow,

“ Think not of honour, but preferment now.”

* Creditur, forore necata, vacuum domum scelestis nuptiis fecisse.

SALLUST.

Next Cambden try'd apostacy to teach,
 But cough and age oppress'd his powers of speech.
 Is this the hero of his country's cause,
 Who once oppos'd a rupture of its laws;
 Alas! how chang'd by age and party guise,
 To vote with Pitt, and countenance Excise!
 The country maid, with beauties form'd for joy,
 Thus long defies the tempting rake's decoy;
 At last undone, deserted and distressed,
 " She condescends for shillings to be blest."

Next came that Duke who makes the nation groan,
 By changing British gold to brick and stone;
 Tho' foil'd for once by Cornwall's honest vote,
 On *cover'd ways* he will not change his note;
 Tho' Commons frown, tho' vet'ran Diebbeigge bawl,
 He, like the weakest, still is for the wall.

Ere

Ere he began, Lord Rawdon's voice was heard,
 His cheek turn'd pale, and quick he disappear'd.
 With chap-fall'n face, and eye that spoke despair,
 For great Lord Hawkesbury cou'd not be there,
 He to the King a costly present bore
 From Bute, his tutor sage in days of yore ;
 A splendid book, with many an herb and flow'r,
 Which footh'd his mind for loss of place and pow'r ;
 Tho' some surmise he yet exerts his skill,
 And is the master of the puppets still.

At last, from Scotland, great Dundas arrives,
 From canvassing for votes among their wives.
 Nine jealous husbands, who with fury burn,
 Had sworn, like Abelard, ~~they~~ shou'd return :
 Their savage purpose fill'd him with affright,
 In post-horse haste he left them in the night :

Tho'

Tho' versed in arts with him so much in vogue,
 To first abuse, and then to screen a rogue,
 He fault'ring spoke : but Sheridan arose,
 And was himself a host among his foes;
 With sterling genius beaming from his eyes,
 Thus to the courtly phalanx he replies :

“ If from my country's cause I cou'd depart,
 “ And selfish prudence had possess'd my heart ;
 “ If lost to friendship, honour, and to fame,
 “ Enroll'd with your's I cou'd disgrace my name,
 “ I Treas'ry favours many years had known,
 “ Had bow'd at levees, and approach'd the throne ;
 “ Had join'd in many a dark and deep design,
 “ The prefs to fetter and to undermine ;
 “ 'Gainst France and liberty had rear'd my voice,
 “ And your Excise had been my fav'rite choice,

D

“ I then

" I then had sat, nor made yon Premier fret,
 " Nor prov'd he paid by running more in debt :
 " I then had sav'd full many a midnight toil,
 " And shut my eyes to Oriental spoil ;
 " Had prais'd defaulters, magnified a dunce,
 " And, like John Wilkes, had look'd two ways at once.
 " Leading the city by Delusion's string,
 " He keeps their cash, and pacifies the King.

" Say, can I listen to your tamp'ring wiles,
 " Approv'd by NORFOLK, blest with PORTLAND's smiles ;
 " While BEDFORD deigns my conduct to approve,
 " And DEVON steady in his country's love ;
 " Whilst good FITZWILLIAM takes his country's part,
 " Possessing Rockingham's unfullied heart ;
 " And still, to blast each mean unmanly view,
 " BURKE to the cause of liberty is true,

" With

- " With patriot zeal his ardent bosom glows,
 " Philanthropy and genius grace his brows;
 " What tho' in warm debate, a difference slight,
 " Shed o'er your hopes a momentary light :
 " Perish those hopes ! ye pension'd slaves attend !
 " The man so much your dread, is still my friend ;
 " His honest warmth bespeaks a noble mind,
 " From int'rest free, by no mean views confin'd.
 " So when for gold and gems, the miners toil,
 " Beneath the surface of Golconda's soil;
 " When from collision sparks of fire expand,
 " They prove rich ore and precious stones at hand.
 " Whilst Fox and CONWAY help our great design,
 " What can seduce with men like you to join ?
 " Presumptive ignorance your purpose mars,
 " Trick first began, and still supports your farce.
 " Apostate

" Apostate meat let treach'rous A——d carve,
 " For fear his wife and family shou'd starve*.
 " Whilst, as my friends, I have a splendid host,
 " Of arts, of arms, of sciences the boast,
 " I am content to meet your steady hate,
 " The frowns of fortune, and the storms of fate;
 " Nor would I leave, for all your glitt'ring store,
 " A flow'ry lawn to batten on a moor."

* The reasons given by this deserter for so shamefully quitting his friend and benefactor, Lord North, remind me of a clergyman, in the reign of King William, who being reproached by the Nonjurors for taking the oaths, after his frequent declarations to the contrary, replied, " I had seven reasons—a wife and six children."

F I N I S.

